

Minutes of...Children's Network Policy Council

Details

Date: February 25, 2009

Time: noon

Place: County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino.

Attendees

- Charles Adams, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino
 - Rick Arden, Probation – Juvenile
 - DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Department of Children's Services
 - Karen Bell, District Attorney – Juvenile
 - Regina Coleman, County Counsel
 - Amy Cousineau, Children's Network
 - Meaghan Ellis, Department of Public Health
 - Cindy Faulkner, First 5 San Bernardino
 - Chris Gardner, Public Defender – Juvenile
 - Ron Griffin, Preschool Services Department
 - Linda Haugan, Human Services Administration
 - Margaret Hill, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
 - Mike Markel, County Counsel
 - Mike Schertell, Department of Behavioral Health
 - Robin Sherman-Young, SB County, Superior Courts, Division of Children and Family Services
 - Rebecca Stafford, Children's Fund
 - Nancy Swanson, TAD Administration
 - Kathy Turnbull, Children's Network
 - Kathy Watkins, Human Services Legislation & Research
 - Greg Zerovnik, SB County Library
 - Faye Eastman, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools – Foster Youth
 - Tamela Young, TAD t.young@hss.sbcounty.gov
 - Tamara Ross, District Attorney
 - Tammy Williams, Children's Network
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Welcome and Introductions

Linda Haugan convened the meeting at 12:10 p.m. Self introductions were made. Amy introduced her Mentee, Pamela Young from TAD. Linda requested that the agenda item 5.1 be moved up before the information items. **A motion was made to accept the agenda as presented with the recommended change. A motion was made by Ron Griffin and seconded by Nancy Swanson to approve the minutes as submitted.**

**Topics
Discussed**

The table below identifies the topics discussed in the meeting and the person who led each discussion.

| Topic | Discussion Leader |
|--|--------------------------|
| Welcome and Introductions | Haugan |
| Approval of Agenda | Haugan |
| Approval of January 2009 minutes | Haugan |
| Discussion/Action requested to support Community Event – Time for Change | Cousineau |
| Children’s Network Report | Cousineau |
| Children’s Fund Report | Stafford |
| Foster Care Summit Update | Cousineau/Avey-Motikeit |
| SEM (Sexually Exploited Minors) Presentation | T. Ross |
| Other Announcements | All |
| Public Comment | All |

**Key points:
Discussion/Action requested to support Community Event**

The following highlights were given:

- Amy Cousineau asked everyone to look through their agenda packets at the Request for Support Letter from the Time for Change Foundation for their annual luncheon on April 30th.
 - Amy stated she is working on the policy now for request for support letters asking for funds.
 - **Action: Action to approve to be Daffodil Sponsor at \$1,000 which includes 4 seats at lunch and a business card size advertisement. Motion was made by Nancy Swanson and seconded by Ron Griffin.**
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**Key points:
Children’s Network Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Staff is busy working on the Shine the Light Awards Breakfast that is March 25th at 7:30 a.m. at the National Orange Show. The price for tickets will be \$10 a piece. Contact Children’s Network at 909-383-9677 to get your tickets.
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**Key points:
Children's
Fund Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Rebecca Stafford reported the Program Committee of Children's Fund is busy spending money on: the second go around of the CART Academy (Colton At-Risk Teens); Jefferson Hunt Elementary – Men of Excellence and daughters (increased aptitude scores, etc.); two coat drives in the high desert for children in Foster Care; and the next coat drive will be for the north high desert and will include shoes as well.
 - As of this fiscal year, Children's Fund has served 21,422 children.
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**Key points:
Foster Care
Summit Update**

The following highlights were given:

- The event will be held on May 9th from noon to 7 p.m. at CSUSB (California State University San Bernardino).
- The next Foster Care Services Steering Committee will be meeting on Monday, March 2nd at 10 a.m. at Human Services Administration, 150 S. Lena Road, Conference Room A, San Bernardino.
- Amy reminded everyone that the Policy Council members previously approved the amount of \$5,000, providing an itemized budget is submitted timely.
- Faye Eastman reported yesterday she went on a tour of the facilities at CSUSB.
- Faye stated that Foster Youth Services of the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools has agreed to cover the facility costs and the transportation costs of foster youth.
- It is expected there may be 400 youth in attendance.

**Key points:
Sexually
Exploited
Minors)
Presentation**

The following presentation was given:

- Karen Bell introduced Deputy District Attorney, Tamara Ross from the Rancho Cucamonga district. Tamara has been concerned about the minor girls on Holt Boulevard in Ontario being solicited for prostitution. She has put together an informal program together with Juvenile Hall staff.
- Tamara spoke at the Juvenile Justice Institute in January. A reporter was there and did a story that has received lots of public response.
- District Attorney, Mike Ramos is setting a meeting to pull together other government agencies and the community to focus on this issue.
- Tamara referred everyone to the packet of handouts she distributed and had other information she could share via e-mail.
- She has seen an increase in girls whom have run away from home and entered prostitution. The number of cases keeps growing: 1998 and 2004 there were 21 cases; 2005 and 2008 there were 91 cases; and in 2009 there have already been 5 cases.
- Tamara has learned about some young girls advertising on Craig's List, so law enforcement staff are being trained.
- Tamara's investigations have shown that there is also an adult in the background of these prostitution cases. Many times the girls and/or their families are threatened by the pimp.
- It is important to talk with the girls and parents as they are victims of crime. Also according to the penal code a minor can not give consent for sex.
- Tamara mentioned that the young girls shouldn't be called prostitutes, but are actually commercially exploited minors.
- There are very few safe houses for these young girls. Most of them become runaways as often times they are victims of sexual child abuse.
- Tamara mentioned if the young girls or boys have run away and it has been longer then 48 hours, they are often lured into the sex trade for money and resources. The pimps frequent places where young children hang out like: parks; outside of schools; malls; events; bus stations, etc.
- Runaway children can be lured into prostitution by offer of food, clothing, shelter, etc. There was concern about some children being lured into prostitution from group homes.
- The best way for the children to get away from the pimp is to be detained through the juvenile justice system so that they can get the help they need.
- One very good resource has been identified, the Children of the Night facility in Van Nuys, works specifically with sexually exploited minors.
- The focus now is to look at using limited resources the most effective way to get help for these children.
- It was suggested that there needs to be a "Safe House" in San Bernardino County for these young children.
- Tamara thinks there needs to be more education of school teachers and nurses so they know what signs to look for.

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- Tamara mentioned it is very important for these young children to get mental health counseling, especially if they are placed in Juvenile Hall.
 - In Alameda County the Policy Council body set up a Safe House for sexually exploited children.
 - Tamara stated that Karen Bell is the contact for this project.
 - DeAnna Avey-Motikeit asked if the 241.1 committee discussed children that have ran away and are Juvenile Court dependents (300 wards).
Response: Yes, they are discussed.
 - DeAnna wanted clarification of how many of the girls are Juvenile Court dependents that have been placed in groups homes/foster homes and have become involved with prostitution.
 - Rick Arden stated they have had to look for placements outside of California that will serve this particular population.
 - Tamara mentioned she would do some research on the girls identified as sexually exploited Juvenile Court Dependent minors.
 - Karen Bell mentioned there is a coalition formed about sexually exploited minors and that it is very important the community (parents, teachers, PTAs, school nurses, doctors, etc.) is educated about child prostitution. Some of the girls have demonstrated; HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancies, conduct disorder, depression, etc.
 - Karen mentioned it is very important that the police report designates human trafficking of these girls so that they may be eligible for assistance through the D.A. Victim/Witness program.
 - Margaret Hill mentioned that she will make sure the school nurses and Child Welfare Attendance staff is aware of the human trafficking.
 - DeAnna mentioned that social workers and foster parents can be trained about the human trafficking, but they still can't stop children from running away.
 - Kathy Watkins felt that the community needs to be educated on what the early signs are to look for. She was also concerned about the young children that are not known to any county systems and how they would be identified for assistance.
 - It was mentioned that District Attorney, Mike Ramos is taking the lead on this project as directed by Fourth District Supervisor, Gary Ovitt.
 - **The next steps of action will be the Summit meeting on March 20th. Karen mentioned she was hopeful that any of the Policy Council members are welcome to participate. It was suggested that Policy Council members be updated after the first few meetings.**
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**Key points:
Other
Announcement**

The following discussion items were;

- Cindy Faulkner stated that with the State budget being passed last week, there may be some changes on the horizon for the State First 5 Commission and the county commissions. There will be a special election on May 19th, with a measure to divert 50% of the First 5 Commission funds for five years for children's programs. First 5 San Bernardino will still be honoring the current contracts and will only be able to renew contracts for a one year period rather than the three year period. She is hopeful the current contracts and encumbered funding will be honored until July 1, 2010.
- Mike Schertell mentioned that DBH (Department of Behavioral Health) is also facing possible diversion of Prop. 63 funds. This will also be on the ballot on May 19th.
- DeAnna announced on behalf of Trinity Wallace-Ellis of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) that there will be a CASA walk on Thursday, April 2nd at 5 p.m., starting from the CASA office.
- DeAnna announced she will be going before the Board of Supervisors soon to change the name and logo of DCS to Children and Family Services.
- Greg Zerovnik mentioned a new branch of the library will be opened soon in Chino Hills.
- Rick Arden announced that Michelle Scray has just been appointed Chief Probation Officer.

**Key points:
Public
Comment**

No comments.

Next Meeting

March 25, 2009 at noon, County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino.
